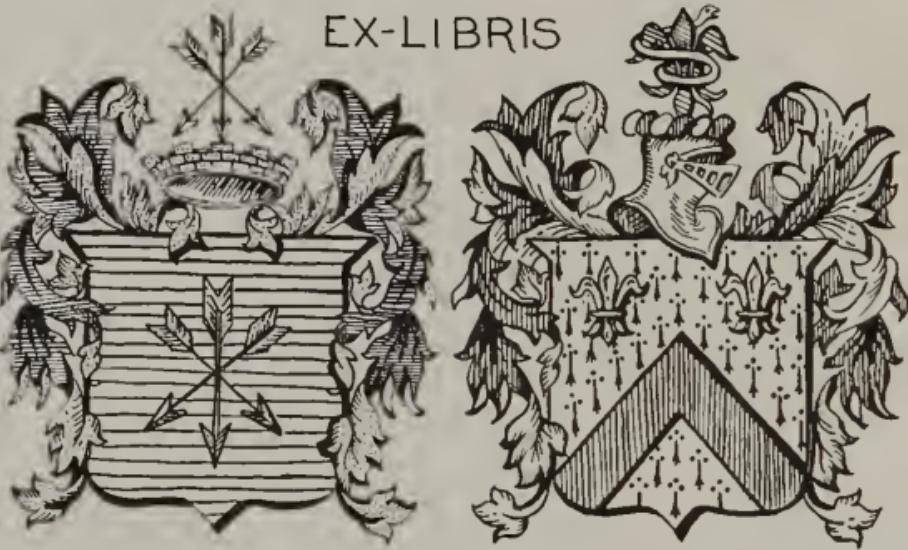


THE  
*FAMILY*  
DENTIST

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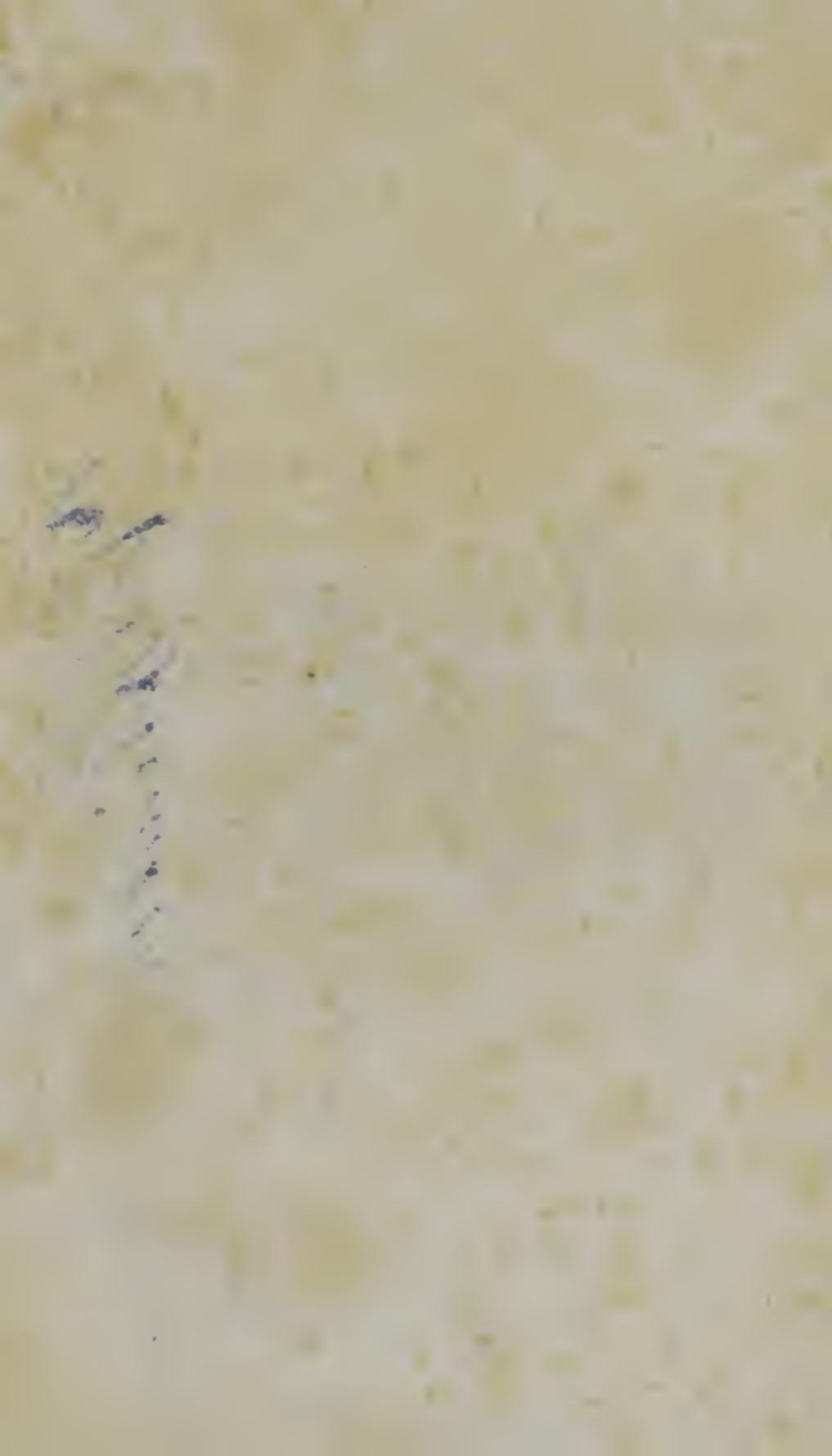
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John H. Miller



THE  
**FAMILY DENTIST;**  
OR, A  
**FAMILIAR TREATISE**  
On the art of securing a  
**BEAUTIFUL SET OF TEETH.**

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“ Be watchful, ye, whose fond maternal arm,  
Would shield defenceless infancy from harm ;  
Mark well the hour, when nature’s rights demand  
The skilful practice of the dentist’s hand.”

---

BY DOCTOR HOMER BOSTWICK,  
DENTIST,  
No. 75 Chambers Street.

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NEW YORK:  
PUBLISHED BY G. P. SCOTT AND CO.

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1835.

Med. Hist.  
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1835

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE design and object of this little treatise, on the management of the teeth, does not include the chimerical idea of rendering the reader competent to operate on his own teeth, or on those of his dependants ; for, were this the case, we should have entitled it "Every Man his own Dentist."

Neither do we flatter ourselves, that it will greatly facilitate the practice of the scientific operator, whose study and experience have already given him a standing in the profession. "The Family Dentist" is intended rather as a *parental monitor*, cautioning those who have the care of children, against the baneful consequences of *neglect* in a most important branch of their duty.

The future health, beauty, and happiness, of the tender objects of affection, which Heaven has committed to their charge, it is well known, depend in a great measure, on the healthful condition of their organs of mastication ; and such a condition can never be secured without the early and assiduous attention of those to whom are delegated the superintendence of their conduct, and the control and formation of their habits.

Innumerable are the ills entailed upon the human race by the ignorance or neglect of those on whom devolves the duty of superintending their infancy and childhood ! But in no instance is this delinquency followed by such numerous trains of physical evils, as invariably and necessarily attend a neglect of the teeth ! It is thus, that “the sins of the parents are visited upon the children” with a vengeance.

The importance of good teeth, as respects bodily health and personal appearance, is now almost universally acknowledged, and cannot be too highly appreciated. *Diseased teeth* are incompatible with health and beauty ; as they cannot help to impart to the food which they masticate, a portion of their own impurities, which may be rank poison to the blood ! A morbid state of some part of the system is the inevitable consequence ; and a great portion of the complaints arising from indigestion, have their origin in the imperfections of the teeth and gums. There are few persons who would not turn in disgust from their most favorite delicacy, were one of their soundest teeth extracted and thrown into their plate ; and yet they think nothing of grinding their food with instruments that are not quite so pure as polished ivory ! nay, they are actually in a state of decomposition

from a gangrenous affection ! The diseased saliva, says Dr. White, which mixes with the food in mastication, is again taken up into the system, by the absorbents, and is carried round by the circulation in the mouth, where it receives an additional supply of its poisonous particles ; then descends again into the stomach ; and it continues the rounds, increasing the disease at every turn, hardly to be perceived indeed at first ; but, in a short time the appetite begins to fail, the spirits become languid ; one tooth after another commences decaying, and those caries continue to advance towards the internal cavity ; or, in other words, into the nerve, with unusual rapidity, until the crowns are destroyed, and the gums are studded over with old stumps.

The teeth, thus neglected, soon become a source of anguish as acute and dreadful as any in the fearful catalogue of diseases;

and when we reflect that so large a mass of pain may be averted by care and foresight, or remedied by application to the skilful hand of a scientific dentist, we cannot help wondering at the general indifference which is evinced to the subject. What mother would willingly thus entail pain and deformity upon her innocent offspring ! Who would wish to hear the following sarcastic lines applied to a favourite daughter:

— — — — “ Her quarrelling teeth  
Of such a colour are, that they themselves  
Scare one another, and do stand at distance.”

Ignorance and neglect, on this subject, are far less excusable now than they were in former times ; for the science of *dentalogia*, which includes the art of preserving the health and beauty of the teeth—on which the health and beauty of the whole person greatly depends—was very

imperfectly known to our ancestors. It is true, that some of the ancients turned their attention to this subject ; and Hippocrates, in various parts of his works, describes the functions of the teeth, the different periods of their appearance during the process of teething, the principal diseases to which they are liable, and the plan of treating them. But the art of Dental Surgery cannot properly be attributed to him. He flourished in Greece not quite five centuries before the Christian era.

Celsus, also, a celebrated physician of Rome, has left the world, in his writings, some very curious and important observations on the teeth : on extracting, scraping, and plugging them ; and also on scarifying the gums, and on fixing loosened teeth with gold wire. But it was not until the seventeenth century, that the profession of Dentistry began to be known in Europe

as a distinct branch of surgical operations; and in our own country it was scarcely heard of, prior to the commencement of the present century. Since then, several excellent works have been published on the subject, by Parmly, Fitch, Pleasant, White, and others; besides an excellent poem, in five cantos, entitled *Dentalogia*, or the Diseases of the Teeth, and their proper remedies, by Solyman Brown, A.M. with notes by Parmly.

These various publications have awakened attention to the importance of the subject, as respects both health and beauty; and if the practical advice and information embodied in these works, were carefully read and *understood*, and promptly and scrupulously followed, an amount of chagrin, mortification, deformity, expense, pain; nay agony, would be saved or prevented, enough to startle every reader!

As respects personal appearance, there needs no argument to prove the immense importance of a good sound set of teeth—shining like two twin arches of pearl, carefully set in coral. But if those pearls have become dim by neglect, it is certainly a consolation to know that the plastic hand of art, directed by science, experience, and skill, can restore them to their pristine polish and purity ; when the gladdened fair one can gaze again in her mirror, and with a sweet smile of self-complacency, repeat those lines of our native poet—

“Her portals of breath, with its pearls studded round,  
Once dim from neglect, now new polished are seen,  
And oft as they part to her voice’s sweet sound,  
A thousand young cupids are peeping between.”

So far, therefore, from precluding the necessity of a practical dentist in every family, the principal object of this little treatise is to admonish parents and guardians when to call him in, after having

faithfully discharged their duty in retarding and delaying this necessity as long as possible.

The fact is now known, and abundantly demonstrated, that the human teeth are not actually inanimate ossifications ; but that they are actually *organized bodies*, supplied with nerves of acute sensibility, absorbent vessels, and the faculty of imbibing and circulating a nutritious fluid, from which they derive their sustenance, growth, health, and beauty. It has been proved that they are sensitive organs, "tremblingly alive" to the deleterious influence of almost every moral and physical disorder ; and that their most insidious foe is *sensuality*, or an inordinate and excessive indulgence of the animal appetites ; while their best friends are temperance and cleanliness. To impress this truth deeply on the minds of parents and

guardians, and to caution them against those pretenders in the profession, whose quackery increases the evil it affects to remove, are two grand objects of the "Family Dentist." For this purpose, it is not necessary to go into an elaborate and philosophical description of the teeth, to analyze the substance of which they are composed, to trace their origin, formation and growth; the successive order of their appearance, together with their number, names and positions. All this would be useless, except to those who wish to study the subject as a profession. We shall, therefore, merely attempt to show in the most plain and simple language the importance and necessity of an *early attention* to the subject in infancy, in order to secure for the adult a beautiful and healthy set of teeth; without which every one is liable to the pangs of disease, the blemishes

of partial deformity, and the mortification of a fetid breath.

In the next place we would cheer with encouragement those desponding sufferers who are vainly lamenting the consequences of the neglect above deprecated. Although prevention is always far better than cure, still those who are doomed to lament the evil here alluded to, ought “not to sorrow as man without hope;” for there is still “balm in Gilead;” there is help and succour in science. The destroyer may be arrested in his progress—his hand may yet be stayed; and the fading blossoms of beauty may be restored to new life and perennial freshness. All this may be effected by the skilful and scientific dentist.

“ But use discretion ;—oft imposture wears  
The same external guise that merit bears ;  
And bold pretenders show consummate wit  
By duping others to abandon it.  
Beware of those whom science never taught,  
The hard but useful drudgery of thought.”

The public cannot be too carefully cautioned and guarded against the impositions of dental quacks and pretenders, to which the unsuspecting are peculiarly liable, more so, perhaps, than to any other species of quackery whatever. Whether this fact exists from the very nature of the subject, from the fashion of not making diseases of the teeth a popular study ; or from the secrecy and mystery with which the subject has been purposely enveloped, we will not now stop to inquire. It is sufficient for our present purpose to know, as we do from our own experience, that the afflicted are too often improperly treated, and that many pretended *cures* are only aggravations of the original disease.

Our own knowledge of the subject is the result of long study and *experience*. Of course, it cannot be imparted to others *by*

*words* ; for it can only be acquired by the same patient and laborious process, by which we ourselves become possessed of it. But what we think we can do, shall at least be *attempted* ; and we will endeavour so far to enlighten parents, as to alarm their fears, and awaken their apprehensions, that all *is not right* in the *mouths of their children*. This will lead to an investigation of the cause ; when we will farther instruct them how to arrest the progress of the incipient evil before its advancement renders an operation necessary.

This we shall aim to do in the most plain and simple language, divested of all technicalities. We do not aspire to shine as a book-maker; our sole object being to do good; and we trust, that what is here advanced will not be less welcome to parents for its honest simplicity.

Under this impression we submit the  
“Family Dentist” to the public and the  
profession, without vanity and without  
fear.

THE AUTHOR,

“ But when, from loss of teeth, the food must pass—  
A crude, and rigid, and unbroken mass—  
To the digestive organs; who can know  
What various forms of complicated wo  
May rise terrific from that single source?  
For nature, once resisted in her course,  
Breeds frightful things.”

## THE FAMILY DENTIST, &c.

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THE operations of nature, when not divested or retarded by casual or artificial impediments, are generally felicitous and correct ; and she would probably do every thing well and right, were it not for such interference. Every infant born into the world, of orderly, virtuous, and healthy parents, would perhaps be totally exempt from disease and pain, were it compelled to live according to the *genuine* dictates of nature, which are generally not incompatible with the laws of *divine order*. But, alas ! how few of the infant race are permitted thus to live ! Almost every one, within the short period of its first year, is

initiated into the habits of *intemperance*, the effects of which are lasting, and too often fatal.

Start not, ye tender, affectionate and orderly parents. Intemperance is not confined to the abuse of stimulating fluids ; and the *venders of alcohol* are perhaps less dangerous to the health of the rising generation than the CONFECTIONERS—the retailers of candies, lozenges, and the thousand numberless preparations of gypsum and sugar with which children are gorged and amused, until their delicate organs become relaxed, and their young and tender teeth injured beyond reparation.

A handsomely-formed mouth, furnished with a regular and sound set of teeth, will more than balance a thousand personal defects. The smiles which play around such a mouth, bespeak peace and happiness within, and its possessor is al-

ways cheerful and pleasant. In the language of Bonaparte, "his teeth are a letter of recommendation," which will carry him through the world; while he who, through carelessness or vice, has suffered his teeth to decay, is so sensitively conscious of the partial deformity, that he has no confidence or cheerfulness in addressing strangers, whom he seldom ventures to look in the face. He has acquired, and habitually wears, an expression of care and hopeless anxiety. Conscious of an offensive breath, social intercourse is a burthen to him. He is emphatically an object of compassion.

But how much more to be pitied is the helpless female under similar circumstances! We know several in this city who were once accounted the fairest of the fair, and share as the favourite belles of the gayest circles. But where are they now? Light dresses and thin shoes subjected them

to sudden and violent colds, which always seize upon the weakest and most exposed parts of the system. Their teeth had been neglected by their mothers in infancy and childhood ; caries assailed them in their youthful prime ; they timidly shrank from the idea of a surgical operation ; and one after another of their beautiful and delicate pearls sunk to ruin.

Where are they now ? Shrunk into retirement, they are the mere skeletons of their former selves, objects for unfeeling fools to name with sneers, and for the compassionate to pity. When not writhing under the agony of the toothache, they are so conscious of their loss of beauty, that they dare not venture into society, but endure a life of solitude and retirement.

One of them, who has a cultivated mind and a ready wit, we called to see the other

day, and found her seated at the piano-forte. On requesting her to sing a favourite of ours, she instantly complied ; but instead of the original words, sang the following parody, which she executed in a style so touching, that her mother actually melted into tears :

“ We met, 'twas in a crowd, and I thought he would shun me,

*For the loss of my teeth I was sure had undone me.*

He spoke, his voice was cold, though his smile was unaltered ;

He knew how much I felt, for his deep-toned voice faltered.

*He showed his pearly teeth, how I envied their whiteness !*

A gas-light shone on me, how I hated its brightness !

A deep sigh escaped me, which I could not then smother.

Oh ! thou art the cause of this anguish, my mother !”

Oh, mothers ! next to the morals and virtue of your daughters, let their teeth claim your first, your last, your constant and unwearied attention. Their earthly

happiness depends upon your care of them during the helpless period of infancy and childhood. If you wish to secure their blessings, and would not incur their maledictions, preserve their teeth from premature decay.

Without any farther prefatory remarks, we shall commence our observations on the management of the teeth, at the period of their first appearance in the infant's mouth ; and inform their mother what she is to look for, what she is to expect, and what treatment her child should receive at this important crisis.

"The first dentition claims our earliest care,  
For oft obstructed nature labours there."

## SECTION I.

### OF DENTITION, OR CUTTING THE FIRST TEETH.

Hippocrates observes that “infants cut their teeth more readily in winter than in summer; that such as are rather inclined to be lean, cut them more easily than those that are very fat; and children, who are loose in their bowels, the most safely of all.” This eminent physician of antiquity was an accurate observer of human nature, and has left us many valuable precepts which have been amply illustrated by modern practice. That teething is an important period in the constitution of infants, is a fact acceded to by almost every writer who has treated on the subject. For all agree that the body, during teething,

is much disposed to inflammation ; and that, lastly, strong children often fall into a fever at this time ; while those who are weak and delicate, cut their teeth easily, though frequently later than the others.

The age at which the teeth first make their appearance, varies much in different children. Some have been known to come into the world with two or more teeth. This has been the case with at least two monarchs—Richard III. of England, and Louis XIV. of France. But Shakspeare, in the first instance, makes the Duke of Gloucester draw an unfavourable inference from the phenomenon.

“ ————— which plainly show that he  
Was born to snarl, and bite, and play the dog.”

Polydore Virgil mentions a child that was born with six teeth ; but what effect this precocity of dentition had on the individual's character, we are not informed.

In many instances, on the other hand, the first teeth have not protruded through the gums until the fourteenth, sixteenth, and even the eighteenth month ; nay, instances have occurred where the infant has been toothless for two or three years. But, as a general rule, teething may be said to commence between the fourth and eighth month. Various symptoms usually precede and attend the process of dentition or teething. The infant drivels ; the gums swell, and become somewhat inflamed ; while there is often an unusual redness in the cheeks, and sometimes eruptions on the skin, particularly about the face and scalp. There is also a looseness of the bowels, attended with griping, and green or pale stools. The urine (sometimes of a milky colour) is frequently made in less or greater quantity than usual, and accompanied with pain. These symptoms are often

followed by a cough, difficult breathing, convulsions, fever, *scrofula*, and sometimes *by water in the head*. When these symptoms, or some of them prevail, the mother may know that two teeth are endeavouring to make their way through the gum of the lower or upper jaw.

This beautiful and interesting process of nature, is called dentition, or teething, and is generally effected without excessive pain, or exciting any very alarming symptoms of constitutional sympathy. Such, however, is not always the case, as it sometimes produces symptomatic diseases, which only terminate in death, as our bills of mortality will abundantly show. If the gums are not absorbed away as fast as the teeth grow, and want room, there will be heat and pain created in the parts; swelling, redness, and other symptoms of inflammation follow.

A mother should always be on her guard, and watchful of the slightest alteration in her infant's health, at the period when the process of teething is expected to commence. As soon as she observes an increased flow of saliva from the infant's mouth, with a propensity to bite with its toothless gums, and a habit of thrusting its fingers between them, while it exhibits evident signs of uneasiness,—she should often and carefully inspect the state of the swollen gums, and mark the progress of their inflammation. If this becomes excessive, or even considerable, she should follow the indications of nature, which evidently point out the requisite modes of giving relief, by furnishing it with some proper substance to bite on, such as a hard crust of bread, or the smooth surface of an ivory or silver coral toy. With such auxiliaries nature seldom

fails of forcing the little strangers through the gums. But should this successful issue be retarded too long, and the gums continue to swell, with an increased inflammation, almost instant and permanent relief can be afforded the little sufferer, merely by opening the passage for the teeth, which are striving to escape from their confinement, with a sharp lancet, which can be easily done without danger or pain. The cut should be effectually made, deep enough to meet the tooth, and the trouble is all over, when the operation will be rewarded by the infant's smile. Previous to this, however, it may perhaps be proper to administer some laxative medicine, to encourage the slight looseness which generally attends this stage of dentition—such as a few grains of magnesia or rhubarb. On the other hand, should the diarrhœa prove excessive, *opiates*

should be given without delay. Blisters are sometimes very useful, when placed behind the ears, or on the back of the neck. The application of leeches on the outside of the jaws, and on the end of the chin, and on the temples, is also approved of. In the mean time, the infant should be kept warmly clothed, and as quiet as possible. Should convulsions supervene, the warm bath and injections must be resorted to. Sea-bathing, and washing the gums with salt water, may also be recommended, especially when the eruption of the skin is excessive. But the best and most certain remedy for all these symptoms is to remove the cause, by opening a passage through the swollen gum, and thus permitting the imprisoned stranger to escape from confinement. The safety, ease, and simplicity of the operation are too obvious to admit of a moment's hesita-

tion ; and we are pleased to find that the prejudices and apprehensions of parents against this safe and most efficacious operation are fast yielding to the irresistible testimony of experience, and the frequent evidences of its harmlessness and utility. It is impossible for the most sceptical to witness the felicitous effects which are continually resulting from it, without being convinced of its ease, safety, and efficacy. This simple operation has saved the lives of thousands of human beings, and rescued innumerable little sufferers from an intensity of agony, and restored them to ease and happiness.

“ But no unpractised hand should guide the steel,  
Whose polished point must carry wo or weal ;  
With nicest skill, the *dentist's* hand can touch,  
And neither wound too little nor too much.”

The process of dentition, or teething,

generally proceeds in the following relative order :

First, the two central teeth of the lower jaw will be seen piercing the gums, like points of clear glass. In four or five weeks afterwards, the two front teeth of the upper jaw will protrude in a similar manner. A few weeks more repose gives nature sufficient energy to deliver herself of two lateral teeth in the lower jaw ; after which they are met by two corresponding teeth in the upper jaw. These *incisors*, as they are technically called, sometimes make their appearance in the upper jaw before their little partners or antagonists are seen below ; but not often.

After the mouth is thus furnished with eight teeth, four below and four above, arranged in two regular lines, opposed to each other, the mother may shortly expect two officers, in the form of grinders, to

flank the inferior line, on the right and left, but with space enough between them to admit of a new recruit on each side. This manœuvre once effected, is soon after imitated in the line above, and they will now count twelve rank and file. The two expected recruits now make their appearance in the line below, occupying the late vacant spaces between the *incisors* and their more formidable flankers. These are called *canine*, or *dog teeth*; opposite to which, two antagonists soon make their appearance, which are called *eye teeth*. The infant is now furnished with sixteen teeth; these are sometimes immediately succeeded by an additional grinder on each side, below and above, making the whole number twenty teeth; but it is sufficient that the mother be prepared to expect, and to watch the rise and progress of sixteen or twenty; as the infant by that time will

have acquired sufficient age and strength to carry him through the cutting of all the others in safety.

This first set, which are called the sucking, milky, or deciduous teeth, are completed at such various periods, in different children, that it is useless to attempt to define them accurately. Between the fifth and eighth month of the infant's age, the four central incisors, or front teeth, generally make their appearance; from seven to ten months, the four lateral *incisors*; from twelve to sixteen months, the four first *grinders*, or double teeth; from fourteen to twenty months, the four *cuspidanti*, by which we mean the dog-teeth and eye-teeth; from eighteen to thirty-six months the four next grinders, which make up twenty. These periods are only given as general rules, liable to continual exceptions, not only as to *age*,

but also as respects the relations and order in which they succeed each other. But these general rules, indefinite as they are, when taken in connection with a mother's very natural anxiety for the health and ease of her infant, cannot be instrumental in leading her astray.

Thus far has nature, the handmaid of Deity, executed, according to the laws of divine order, the process of *dentition*, or teething; a process in which the only assistance she could receive from the hand of *art*, was the removal of such obstructions and impediments as opposed her progress. She can now rest awhile from her labours, and surveying her works, like her divine author, pronounce them "*all very good.*" It is the province of parental foresight and precaution to keep them in that condition. For this purpose, tem-

perance and habitual cleanliness are indispensably necessary.

“Let each successive day unfailing bring  
The brush, the dentifrice, and, from the spring,  
The cleansing flood ;—the labour will be small,  
And blooming health will soon reward it all.”

## SECTION II.

### ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TEMPORARY, OR FIRST TEETH.

THE enamel of young and newly-formed teeth is very tender and delicate ; and, like the spotless reputation of a beautiful virgin, is liable to be soiled with a breath. As the infant has no reason of its own, the parent or guardian—the mother in particular—is bound to exercise her own matured reason in its behalf. Its appetites must be restrained and regulated ; and, as it cannot practise the virtue of self-denial of itself, the parent must carefully deny it every animal gratification which can possibly endanger its health. For there is a mutual sympathy between

the stomach and the teeth; a diseased stomach being a deadly foe to the health of the teeth, as we have already seen that diseased teeth and gums are deadly foes to the health of the whole system.

But strict attention to the infant's diet is not sufficient. Cleanliness must be attended to with the most scrupulous exactness. Its little mouth must be carefully examined, at least once each day, and whatever particles of food adhere to the teeth must be carefully removed and washed away with luke-warm water, before the infant sleeps or the heat of the mouth causes it to decompose. When the process of decomposition once commences, the enamel of the teeth, or teeth to which the particles adhere, is in imminent danger. Parents, therefore, should carefully guard against the first approach of the

evil; when it once attains a foothold, the fatal mischief is already done.

It is a mistaken idea that the first teeth do not require so much care and attention as their successors; in some respects they require more, for on their state and condition principally depends the health of the permanent teeth which are to take their places. The first teeth are nearly as liable to caries, or mortification, decay, and that terrible scourge, the toothach, as the permanent ones; and as they are intended to perform the office of mastication but for a short period, and that only on such soft substances as constitute the proper nourishment of children, it is evident that they are very susceptible of injury and liable to decay.

This premature decay of the first teeth, when it once commences, goes on much more rapidly than the same process does

in the second, or permanent teeth, which are composed of much more solid and lasting materials. When one of the first teeth has decayed so far that the interior becomes exposed, and the toothach supervenes, the pain is much less severe than that which is experienced in the permanent teeth. The inflammation, however, ought to be subdued as soon as possible; for as the teeth, jaws, and gums are yet in a tender state, the inflammation thus excited in these delicate and sensitive parts will frequently lead to *alveolar abscesses*, or a gathering inside the jaws, and consequent *exfoliation*, independent of the pain the little patient must suffer. By *exfoliation*, we mean that process by which the diseased or corrupted part of a bone separates, or shells off, around the sound part.

When the child first complains of a pain in one of these teeth, the mother

must take it for granted that it arises from an inflammation or an increased action of the blood vessels in or near the part affected. Her first care, of course, must be to remove the cause of the pain by reducing the inflammation, which may generally be effected by applying a mixture of diluted nitric acid. Sometimes it may be subdued, and the pain relieved, by the application of a leech or two to the gums. By such simple means the first teeth may be preserved until the time arrives when they are to be loosened and shed spontaneously.

Those who are conversant with this subject are aware that a connection exists between a first *tooth* and the rudiments of its successor, which is now forming in the jaw, to take the place of its temporary substitute. Therefore, if the *first* tooth is removed *too* soon, this connection will be

destroyed, and the formation of the permanent *tooth* thereby prevented. There are many who doubt this; and, in order to ascertain so important a fact, we have in one or two instances extracted a *first tooth* before any decay had taken place, and before any absorption had commenced; and, in every instance, we found that the second, or permanent tooth, never made its appearance. We therefore conclude, without hesitation, that the premature extraction of a deciduous or first tooth will ever prevent the appearance of a permanent one in its place.

Much judgment and nice discrimination should be exercised in the extraction of the first teeth, which should never be resorted to unless the existence of gumbiles, or pain that cannot be subdued, require it; or it become necessary, in order

to make room for the young permanent teeth. If, however, it be found that a first tooth threatens to deprive the newcomer of its proper and legitimate position, it should by all means be punished by immediate extraction. But on this subject we shall speak more fully presently.

Better thy palace empty be and bare,  
Than a disloyal courtier harbour there.

### SECTION III.

#### OF THE SHEDDING OF THE FIRST TEETH, AND THE APPEARANCE OF THE SECOND SET.

WHEN the deciduous or first teeth have fulfilled their office for an allotted period, say until the child has attained to the age of about six years, the parent may look for an important change in the dental economy, to which every human being is subject, in the morning of life. A new process is about to take place, which generally commences and advances in the same successive or relative order which marked the formation of the first teeth. The roots of the two central teeth in the lower jaw become consumed by absorption,

which leaves these organs too loose for mastication. This symptom announces the coming of two permanent teeth to take their places, and indicates the immediate removal of the loosened delinquents, which should be effected without delay, that they may not interfere with the convenience of the new-comer.

But owing to some hereditary or constitutional defect, it frequently happens that nature neglects or delays to absorb the roots of the first teeth in time to give room for their successors. The consequence is, that the new-comer, which is now teeming with young life and vigour, will be compelled to dodge, and bend, and edge its way into existence in the best manner it can. It will make its appearance either in front or in the rear, or on one side of its unyielding predecessors; thus deranging the natural order of the teeth, and disfiguring the

mouth it was intended to beautify and adorn. If suffered to persist in this eccentric course too long, it cannot be restored to its proper place. Now is the time for the watchful parent to consult a surgeon-dentist, who, if he understands his business, will soon lay the foundation for a beautiful set of permanent teeth, by causing the removal of every unnatural obstruction, and prevent all future irregularities.

Much watchfulness and precaution are necessary while the permanent teeth are making their appearance. As respects regularity and beauty, they doubtlessly require more than their predecessors. After a first tooth is shed, the place it occupied should be daily examined by the parent, who will soon perceive its successor making its appearance. A child's second set of teeth are generally produced in the same relative order as the first, viz.

first, the two central teeth of the lower jaw; then *their antagonists*, in the upper jaw; then their lateral companions, below and above; thus making four in each jaw. From this period to the age of twelve or fourteen, the rest gradually succeed; and, finally, the wisdom teeth, from the age of sixteen to twenty or twenty-six years of age.

Now, if the parents will watch the progress of these permanent teeth—and it is their duty to do so—they will generally find, as before stated, four front teeth in the lower jaw, between the two *canine* or *dog teeth*. This number, in a majority of cases, proves to be one too many; and one of them ought to be removed. If any one will take a little notice, it will be seen that almost every individual, young or old, has one of these four teeth crowding hard between the others—perhaps stand-

ing in a diagonal position—or projecting from the regular curve of the dental arch, either in or out, interfering with the tongue, or bulging out the under lip.

This eccentric tooth is calculated to retain a large quantity of food, inaccessible by the brush, which is liable to decomposition, thereby producing tartar, caries, and decay.

It must be evident to the most unlettered capacity, that the judicious selection and careful removal of one or two of these teeth would afford room for the remainder to grow in their natural and proper positions. Sometimes the removal of one or two teeth which stand back, to the right and left of these, will prove equally beneficial. When this is properly done, a small space will generally remain between the teeth, which prevents their decay, and precludes the necessity of separating them

with a file, the application of which, in the opinion of many, is often injurious to the teeth. The plan here suggested is much safer and more conformable to nature. When redundancy prevails it should always be artificially removed; for we prune fruit-trees, pare our nails, and cut our hair.

Equal care and attention, and even more, are requisite for the upper teeth; for, as respects beauty and usefulness, they are of still more importance than those below. It often happens that the two eye-teeth of the upper jaw will project out of the mouth like the tusks of the sagacious elephant or those of the ferocious wild boar, totally ruining the beautiful symmetry of the lips. If this aberration of these teeth be so great as to prevent their being regulated by extracting the one directly back of them, they should be removed themselves.

We are well aware of the vulgar notion that there is a connection between the eye-tooth and the eye; that there is a cord, or at least a particular nerve, which unites them, and that the extraction of these teeth may endanger the health of the eye. This is a superstitious whim, originating in the love of the marvellous. No such connection exists, and these teeth are removed with as much ease and safety as any others; and much more so than the double teeth.

Care, judgment, and circumspection should be exercised in selecting the proper teeth for removal, and also the *proper time*. If this be done, all will be well. A straight pair of forceps is the only proper instrument for extracting these teeth; by taking hold of the tooth firmly, and giving it a slight turn, as the pulling force is exerted, it they will then come out with

all ease, and probably prove an agreeable disappointment to the patient.

It is a subject that cannot be too strongly impressed upon the minds of parents, that if they wish their children to possess a healthy and beautiful set of teeth, they must be attended to, and regulated, while the first set are shedding and the second are making their appearance.

Delays are dangerous;—be ye wise to-day,  
Nor resign your future peace by slow delay.  
When duties press, 'tis wrong to let them wait;  
Regrets for carelessness may come too late.

## SECTION IV.

### ON THE IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY OF KEEPING THE SECOND SET OF TEETH CLEAN.

WHILE the second teeth are yet young and tender, and are defended only by a very thin coat of enamel, they are much more liable to receive injury, and imbibe the seeds of their future decay, than they are after having arrived to their full growth, and have put on a complete suit of armour of thick, but transparent enamel. What youthful knight-errant would enter the list half armed, with the hope of escaping unhurt, from a contention with veterans? But these tender teeth are not only less than half armed, but they are scarcely half

grown ; for they do not arrive at maturity, in size and strength, until the age of eighteen or twenty, to which period they still continue to grow. Every year gives them more solidity, and adds to the thickness of their covering, their enamel coat of mail.

How important, then, it is that children, say, for instance, a young girl, should pay the same attention to the young family of pearls committed to her charge as she receives from the tenderness of her mother, who washes, combs, and dresses her every morning. Let her wash and brush her teeth every morning and evening, in order that her prayers may be breathed from a clean mouth and pure lips. Let parents look to it, and see that their children do this. Simple pure water and a soft brush should be provided them, and they should not neglect their use. In very

cold weather the water should be made blood-warm, and a little good Castile soap applied to the brush when it is used. Perhaps the taste of soap may be unpleasant at first; but the children, in a very short time, would sooner walk a mile to procure it than eat their breakfast without first tasting it. After the teeth are brushed sufficiently, the mouth should be repeatedly rinsed with a little pure water. This process, faithfully attended to morning and evening, and always after eating, will secure a sweet breath, sound and beautiful teeth, and a host of playful smiles and dimples, always sporting round the lips of a mouth of purity and sweetness.

Let children then be taught the necessity of frequent ablutions, or washing of the mouth. Let this duty be imprinted upon their minds as one that ought to be observed with *oriental* scrupulousness.

'Teach it to them as a religious precept. Tell them that general *cleanliness* ranks next to godliness; and that the external washing of water is the most striking type or figure of the soul's purification, without which no one can see the kingdom of heaven. But that *a clean mouth*, above all, is indispensably requisite for the health of the body.

Why have the Asiatics and Africans such fine teeth, while enlightened Americans, who are born and educated under the lights of science and the gospel, are so deficient in this beautiful ornament? Or why, in our country, do they decay, among the fair sex in particular, at such an early period? We answer, without hesitation, that it is because the former make it a religious duty to carefully wash their mouths after every meal, while the latter do not. The Turks have their *greater* and lesser

ablutions. It is a religious precept among them to make the *lesser ablutions* with the face turned towards Mecca, the birth-place of their prophet, *to rinse their mouth thrice, and to clean their teeth with a brush.* This shows how highly the custom is esteemed by a people who formerly were forbidden to have a tooth extracted without a permission from the emperor.

Pure water and a soft brush are all that is necessary to keep the teeth clean, and the breath sweet. We do not approve of much tooth-powder being used upon the teeth ; being confident, that in most instances, it proves more injurious than beneficial. When it is used, it should be made of proper materials, and ground very fine. Most of the powder now in use resembles emery more than any thing else. Charcoal is most generally too sharp for the teeth, its hard edges cutting away

the enamel. When used at all, it should be very fine, and this only applied occasionally. Tooth powder is much more apt to injure the teeth of young persons than those of more advanced age, because the enamel is more thin, tender, and susceptible of injury.

The question is asked us almost every day, "what causes the tartar to gather upon the teeth?" The answer is easy—it is because the teeth are not kept perfectly clean, by the frequent application of pure water and a soft brush. The small particles of food which remain around and between the teeth, after every meal, undergo a chemical action, and change into a hard substance; this adheres so closely to the teeth, as almost to be a component part of them. In removing this extraneous substance from the enamel of the teeth, some caution is necessary. We

would have remarked that instruments, made expressly for this purpose, and used with care, are the most proper means for effecting this object. The application of acids, which are sufficiently powerful to destroy or remove the tartar, will surely injure the teeth. In taking off this tartar with instruments, the operator should be very careful not to scratch the enamel, and thus cause the teeth to decay.

Every such scratch will retain more or less of those particles which form the tartar; the brush will pass over them, and the heat of the mouth will soon cause the commencement of that chemical action before alluded to. Decomposition succeeds, and the process of mortification follows.

"In dark disguise insidious tartar comes,  
Incrusts the teeth, and irritates the gums;  
Till vile deformity usurps the seat,  
Where smiles should play, and winning graces meet;  
And foul disease pollutes the fair domain,  
Where health and purity should ever reign."

It is a neglect of this trifling labour of cleanliness that causes tartar, and all the nameless ills that teeth are heir to; and we are sorry to add, that the Americans, generally speaking, are more careless on this subject than people of the same rank in any other country. We are emphatically a money-making people, and too many of us are so devoted to that grand object, that all minor considerations are merged in so much per centage. But while the cents are accumulating, the teeth are decaying; and when we have acquired sufficient property to render old age comfortable, those great instruments of comfort, our organs of mastication, are past service, and the toothach embitters the evening of our days. A good set of teeth will redeem all the blemishes of old age, and stand as solid testimonies that the possessor has paid some attention to the

blessings with which Heaven has endowed him, and not laboured altogether for those riches “ which take to themselves wings, and fly away.”

“ Let avarice follow his sordid employment,  
In hoarding up treasures for life’s latest scenes ;  
I’ll waste not the moments allowed for enjoyment,  
Nor squander the season in gaining the means.”

## SECTION V.

### ON THE EXTRACTION OF THE ADULT TEETH.

WHEN early neglect, or any other cause, renders it necessary to extract the tooth of an adult, the operation is not unfrequently entrusted to persons who are totally ignorant of the anatomy of the jaws, and whose pretensions to the “art of tooth-drawing” consists wholly in physical strength. If the diseased tooth be lugged out, with no matter how much pain to the patient, the operator may boast of his success, and the great strength of his arm, in achieving the feat.

It is true, that few serious consequences ever result from this forcing out the teeth; but they sometimes do. An old lady, in

Brooklyn, since dead, was so injured by such an operation, that she suffered excruciating pain, without any respite, except from the use of laudanum, until the day of her death, which occurred more than twenty years afterwards! Indeed, the frightful results which occur from the employment of ill-directed violence, forcibly points out the necessity of some degree of surgical skill, to render it at once a safe and successful operation. Almost every family have their traditions of broken jaw bones, of sound and healthy teeth being extracted for diseased and decayed ones, and of various diseases which are attributed, with more or less truth, to this cause; for which the barber, the blacksmith, or some other unlettered Hercules, must be accountable. Those who are conversant with the anatomy of the teeth and their connection with the jaw, are

aware that the bone which immediately surrounds them is very thin, not much thicker than paper ; consequently, a small piece will almost always come away with a double tooth, without injury. With the front teeth this is not the case, for they can be removed without a particle of the jaw bone adhering to the root, of which they have but one.

The best instruments for extracting the teeth are the old-fashioned turn-key, having a fulcrum and claw, and the straight forceps. In almost every case a tooth can be extracted with them, and when it is so situated that they can be readily used, they always should be. The operation is much less painful than when performed with the turn-key ; for, by cutting the gum well around the tooth, the operator can take hold of it firmly with the forceps, and remove it without injuring or wound-

ing the gum in the least ; but in using the turn-key, the fulcrum must come directly upon the gum, and bruise it in such a manner as to give great pain. This fact can be attested by every one who has ever had the misfortune to feel the turn-key in his mouth.

If the operation of extracting be performed by a skilful and long experienced person, it gives but very little pain—nothing to be compared to a violent tooth-ach for the space of half a minute. The dread which precedes the operation, is a thousand times worse than the operation itself.

The sense of death is most in apprehension.  
Cowards die many times before their death;  
The valiant never taste of death but once.

*Shakspeare.*

This sentiment of the immortal bard is never so strikingly verified as it is in the

simple operation under consideration. But it mostly arises from the fear of *accident*, or want of confidence in the skill of the operator. Let every one, then, be sure to employ a scientific man, a practical artist of known experience. To such an operator any one can submit himself with the utmost confidence. It is highly necessary that he be supplied with a great variety of extracting instruments, that he may be perfectly prepared for any case that may come before him.

## SECTION VI.

### OF PLUGGING OR STOPPING THE TEETH.

Few people are aware of the great benefit of plugging, stopping, or filling a tooth which has begun to decay, and many contend that the operation does more injury than good. This erroneous opinion arises from the fact that there are yet bunglers and pretenders in the profession of dentistry, who pick the pockets of their employers while they destroy their teeth, and who, like some tinkers, make two holes in mending one. The truth is, that, though prevention is far better than cure, the decay of a tooth may be arrested in its progress, and the diseased organ rendered

useful and beautiful by an expert artist, if attended to in season.

Let all persons examine their teeth often, and not neglect it until the pang of toothach admonishes them of past negligence. When the enamel is once perforated by disease, nature will never restore it to its pristine perfection ; but art may not only prevent the progress of decay, but also the attack of pain, and preserve the organ for all the purposes of appearance and utility. Young persons are very apt to neglect their teeth, so long as they are not troubled with the toothach, on the same principle that thousands neglect their manners and habits, until vicious ones become too fatally confirmed to be eradicated. They then regret their negligence in despair. "Now is the accepted time." Let all repair immediately to a skilful dentist, and submit their teeth to his in-

spection. If either of them be perforated by caries, let the hole or cavity be immediately filled, and if it is well done, the tooth will be saved.

It is not our intention or desire in this place to show how this operation is to be performed, but merely to assert a fact, to which thousands will testify, that if decayed teeth are filled as they ought to be, the operation, simple as it may appear, will completely arrest the decay, and save the tooth for the remainder of life. But simple as it is, it is one which few, very few, correctly understand. We would, however, simply remark, that if the cavity of an affected tooth is not, in the first place, well cleaned, and all the decaying part carefully removed, the operation is worse than useless. It must then be made perfectly dry, and stopped so completely solid as to prevent any saliva, air, or any

other extraneous matter whatever, from obtaining entrance into the cavity; otherwise, the operator has merely hastened the destruction of the organ which he has been paid for preserving. In addition to this, the gold, or whatever substance is used for plugging, must be put in so effectually as to stay in, or the wound is only made worse. We would here observe, that gold is the only metal fit for the teeth. Platina may be used with very good effect, but gold, we believe, is the cheapest, and nothing can be better. We are so deeply impressed with the importance of this subject that we cannot conclude this section without impressing it upon the mind of the reader. The operation is safe, easy, and natural. It is merely checking in the bud, the growth of disease, pain, and deformity. It is crushing the serpent in its egg, and preventing a mass of pain which

would immediately follow its maturity. It is preventing a useful and ornamental appendage of the human frame from becoming painful and disgusting. It is merely cherishing the pearls of great price which are committed to our charge, and which we should not cast before swine, or suffer to be destroyed by sensuality.

The soul admires her tenement of clay,  
While we prevent its premature decay.  
Furnish'd alike for pleasure and for use,  
'Tis ours to guard the chattlers from abuse;  
If we admit attacks from moth and rust,  
She'll leave the walls to crumble into dust.

## SECTION VII.

### OF SUPERNUMERARY TEETH.

WE have already intimated that all the redundancies of nature should be removed by art, as we pare our nails, shave the beard, cut the hair, &c. But the prolific dame, we find, is not only prone to be redundant in *quantity*, but also in *number*. For instance, the regular number of permanent teeth is generally thirty-two; but it frequently happens that there are many more than this number, which appear either inside or outside of the regular dental arch, projecting the lips, interfering with the tongue, and deforming the beautiful symmetry of the mouth.

Whatever is superfluous cannot be beneficial, and analogy alone would suggest the propriety of having each of these supernumerary intruders extracted in due time. We have often successfully treated such cases. A gentleman called upon us a short time since, to have a tooth removed which nearly prevented him from speaking intelligibly. It was situated about three quarters of an inch directly back of the front upper teeth, in the roof of the mouth. He had a brother somewhat younger than himself, who also had a supernumerary tooth precisely in the same situation. They had applied to several dentists, all of whom refused to extract them, under the apprehension of doing some mischief by the operation, not being well acquainted, we presume, with the anatomy of the parts concerned. I removed the disagreeable intruders with a

pair of forceps, without the slightest hesitation ; and presented one, with a drawing, to Dr. Mott.

If nature of her bounties be profuse,  
And give us blessings more than we can use,  
She will not blame us when we thus destroy  
A useless surplus we cannot enjoy.

## SECTION VIII.

### OF TARTAR AND SCURVY OF THE GUMS IN THE ADULT.

Of the causes and origin of tartar on the teeth, we have already treated in Section IV.; but we are inclined to believe, from our own observation and experience, that few persons are fully aware of all its deleterious and dangerous effects. Mr. Brown, with much propriety, in his excellent poem terms it “insidious tartar;” for it comes upon us by stealth, and before we are aware of its presence, it is already busy at its work of destruction.

“The formation of a calculous deposite upon the teeth, (says Mr. Bell) in a greater

or less degree, may almost be said to be universal; for although in many persons of sound health and temperate habits it is possible, by care, to remove it so immediately after its deposition that the teeth are generally kept free from it, still, I believe, it is in all cases produced, and would accumulate, but for the constant attention to the proper means for its removal." It is an acrimonious, crusty matter, which accumulates around the necks of the teeth; and it not unfrequently happens that persons, through want of care and attention in having this matter removed, have lost the whole of their teeth. Indeed, with the exception of gangrene, or mortification, there is no kind of injury to which the teeth are exposed so commonly and so extensively destructive as this concretion.

In gathering around the necks and

roots of these organs, particularly the front teeth of both jaws, it becomes a local cause of inflammation in the gums. It is this disease which usually occasions the loss of the teeth in old persons, who might otherwise have retained a good set of teeth during their lifetime. This inflammation goes on to suppuration ; or, in other words, pus, or matter, is formed around the roots, under the gums. This is mixed with the saliva, and imperceptibly swallowed with the food, producing indigestion and foul breath. Every respiration feeds the lungs with unwholesome air, which often leads to the most fatal pulmonary disorders.

In aged people, the tartar gradually insinuates itself down to the edges of the jaw bone, and as the front teeth are kept in their places principally by the firmness of the gums, they are often caused to

drop out by the presence of tartar. It is, therefore, highly important that the old, as well as the young, should have this insidious enemy carefully removed by some skilful dentist, and afterwards prevented from accumulating by the frequent application of a soft brush, with soap and water.

Would you avoid this last of human woes,  
Nor have the chin reach up to woo the nose,  
Preserve the teeth to separate the pair,  
Nor let insidious tartar harbour there.

## SECTION IX.

### OF THE TOOTHACH.

OUR oft-repeated maxim, that prevention is better than cure, is seldom so effectually illustrated as in an attack of the tooth-ach. It is then that a bitter recollection of past neglect pierces the heart with a pang almost as keen as that which affects the delicate and sensitive nerve of the injured tooth. There are few who have not experienced this exquisite sensation ; but to those who have luckily escaped it, we would offer the most earnest exhortations, that they read and digest our advice, and resort to the means we shall point out, to prevent the pain of experience ; for in this case, as in many others,

“Where ignorance is bliss,  
'Tis folly to be wise.”

If wisdom is to be gained only by experience, take our word for it, the toothach is a terrible pain, and may always be prevented by careful attention to cleanliness, and temperance in eating and drinking. In the meantime, we will endeavour to explain the cause of this scourge, and the best and most simple method of removing it, when we do unfortunately become the objects of its malignity.

If we permit the body of a tooth to decay, so far as to expose the membrane which conceals the nerve, or that substance which many call the marrow, the neglect is severely punished by a most excruciating pain. This is the way in which dame Nature always punishes any trespass on her secret domains; and the nerves, which are the mere feelers of the soul, penetrating from the life-giving, spiritual principle, into every part of the

material body, should be kept sacred from the touch of material objects. The human frame is the tenement and residence of a celestial guest; and if we, as landlords, suffer it to fall to decay before the term of lease has expired, the tenant has power to punish us, and she always does it in a most *feeling* manner. But, however just may be our afflictions, we are still legitimate objects of pity and compassion; and it is ever the study of the charitable to alleviate the miseries of human nature, and some very excellent remedies have consequently been invented and employed to alleviate the toothach. But, as the magicians of Egypt imitated three of the miracles of Moses, but failed in the fourth, and acknowledged his superiority, so the quacks of the present day have imitated many of the remedies for the toothach, some of which augment the evil they are

warranted to cure. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that every new nostrum, by which quackery professes to cure the toothach, should for a time be caught at, in preference to extraction, which is generally the only alternative.

The toothach, we have seen, is the result of inflammation ; a local inflammation, attacking one of the most sensible membranes and delicately organized structures in the human system. It will not, therefore, appear surprising, that the application of remedies, immediately in contact with the surface of this membrane, or nerve —especially such irritating compounds as are too often recommended—should increase the inflammation rather than allay it. Even the best of them, when you give the highest prices, are mere palliatives, to ease the present pang, and give

the sufferer time to adopt some more permanent remedy.

So far as our experience goes, the following applications are the most innocent and effectual. They can very readily be procured at an apothecary's shop, for a very trifling sum; thus at once saving money and avoiding the impositions of pretenders:

R. Pulv. Alum, 3i.

Spir. Æther. Nitr. f. 3ss.

Mixed together.

R. Acid Muriat, f. 3ss.

Aqua distillatæ, f. 3ij.

Mixed together.

R. Argenti Nitrat. grs. ii.

Aq. font. f. 3i.

Mixed together.

Cajeput Oil will sometimes relieve the toothach. A small piece of Opium put into the cavity of the tooth, and kept there for a few days, will also give temporary relief.

By wetting a small piece of lint with either of the above liquids, and introducing the same into the cavity of the affected tooth, after it has been perfectly dried, relief will often be experienced, and the remedy will generally be found beneficial, if not efficacious. Cutting around the tooth, or separating the gum from it with a sharp lancet, will also give a temporary relief, as also will leeches applied to the gums. All these different methods should be tried, if it be deemed very advisable to save the tooth.

The nerve of a tooth in a state of partial decay, may be destroyed by a small instrument, made expressly for the purpose, when the cavity is so situated as to be easily got at. This can be generally done with any of the front teeth, and sometimes with the side teeth, when but one branch of the nerve is exposed. But these branches most

generally communicate with each other, so that it is difficult to effect this object without inflicting much and often protracted suffering. I have lately been in the habit of destroying the nerve in preference to extracting the tooth, when the patient had but few teeth remaining, and none to spare, by starting it from its socket. To effect this object, I have entirely separated the gum from the tooth, and then, with the plain, straight forceps, have removed the tooth sufficiently to separate the nerve from the jaw, which is done by the slightest movement. I then push it immediately back into its proper place so quickly as to prevent any blood from insinuating itself between the roots of the teeth and the jaw bone. The patient, in this case, must then bring his teeth firmly together, to keep the loosened one in its place, and must continue to

do so for several days. In the course of a week every disagreeable sensation in the tooth will cease, when it may be plugged and saved.

I have performed this operation on the back teeth numerous times, with success. In some instances it has failed ; but those who have suffered the loss of nearly all their teeth are willing to endure much pain, in preference to losing any more. It is always desirable to save a tooth which is in a salvable state, but more particularly when they have but few companions remaining to cheer their latter days. The easiest way of effecting this object is doubtless the best ; and long experience has convinced us that this is one of the best methods of effecting the object, and I think it decidedly to be preferred.

But, after all, as we have before stated, the only true method to prevent all this

trouble, and an immensity of pain, is to have the teeth occasionally examined by a competent dentist, and if any cavities are found, to have them faithfully filled or plugged. This is the only true preventive, which precludes all pain, and preserves the teeth for ornament and use.

The arch of pearls, decayed and old,  
Should be repair'd with virgin gold;  
For thus we may the organs save,  
And bear the treasures to our grave.  
Though just this counsel--if we will  
In youth, we can do better still;  
By daily cleanliness we may  
Preserve these organs from decay,  
For teeth ne'er feel decay nor pain  
Where purity and temperance reign.

## SECTION X.

### TOOTH POWDERS.

IT is an old maxim, that “one may buy gold too dear,” and we do not hesitate to say that many buy pearls too dear, for there are compounds sold at the shops which make the teeth “white and beautiful as orient pearls,” at the expense of permanent and irremediable injury to the teeth.

Many of the tooth powders which are offered for sale contain a quantity of tartaric or other acid, which effects a gradual decomposition of the enamel, and lays the foundation of premature decay. Under this conviction, and knowing that the use of acids to the teeth cannot be too strongly

deprecated, we have prepared a compound of our own, which will render the teeth clean and white, and which is in every respect as simple and innocent as wheat flour.

I would mention here the necessity of making use of some kind of wash for the gums, after the teeth have been cleaned. *I mean, after removing the tartar from about the teeth with instruments*, which always loosens the gums from the teeth; therefore, it requires something to harden and close them again around these organs of mastication. Either of the following lotions will be found very good, and most generally should be used after the operation of removing the tartar has been performed:

R. Poly. Alum, grs. x.

Tinct. Mur. and Bark, 3ii.

Aq. font. 3i. Misce.

R. Alum, 3iss.

Tinct. Myrrh, f. 3iii.

Mist. Camph. f. 3vss. Misce.

R. Infusi Rosæ, f. 3ii.

Decoct. Cinchonæ, f. 3ii. Misce.

By taking a little of either of these lotions and holding it in the mouth for one or two minutes—say once or twice a day, and continuing its use four or five days—great benefit will be the result, in restoring and hardening the gums.

## SECTION XI

### OF ARTIFICIAL TEETH, AND THE MODE OF INSERTING THEM.

As we said in a former section, those who through ignorance, or culpable negligence, now lament the loss of their teeth, ought not to be sorry as those without hope; for even yet it is not too late to redeem their past errors, and secure a beautiful set of teeth for the remainder of their days. After all we have said and done for the rising generation, and after all our precepts and instructions for the preservation of their teeth, some will be found unwise enough to neglect our counsel, and to suffer the consequence. But to those who have already lost their teeth, it

must certainly be a great consolation to know that the hand of a skilful dentist can so far restore the losses of nature, as to appearance and even beauty, as to deceive the keenest eye.

There are but two proper modes of inserting teeth; namely, by setting the artificial teeth on gold plates, with broad springs; or by ingrafting, or setting them upon old roots.

Those persons whose front teeth have so far decayed as to render it impossible for them to be preserved by plugging or stopping with gold, ought not to hesitate to have them cut off even with the gums, and artificial teeth set upon them. Under such circumstances, the nerves of the old teeth are generally dead, so that the operation of cutting or filing them off, gives very little or no pain. When teeth are properly set in this way, upon sound and solid

roots, they will sometimes remain firm, sound and beautiful for fifteen or twenty years. This is so much clear gain from the ravages of time, and obtaining a new lease for youth and beauty. It is so many years added to the enjoyment of life. How many happy conjugal engagements could be consummated in that period, nearly one-third of man's allotted span. It is certainly worth the serious attention and consideration of all whose teeth are unfortunately in a state of decay.

But if the teeth, or many of them, have been extracted, or removed by accident, the best method of supplying their loss is by having artificial teeth, or sound healthy teeth from another person, fixed upon plates of gold, which must be made to fit the gums very accurately. To such plates, springs or clasps are attached, which take hold of or embrace the back teeth, and are

thus supported in their new situation, in such a manner as answers all the purposes of appearance, and even of mastication.

In all cases, however, the springs or clasps which take hold of sound teeth, should be made broad or flat; otherwise they are liable to do much injury to their supporters, and, like new cloth in an old garment, make the original evil still more aggravated. For the same reason, wires or ligatures should never be used.

If there be any teeth remaining in the jaws of sufficient soundness and stability to support these springs or clasps, whole sets can be replaced in this manner, so as to answer a very valuable purpose. Teeth can be so ingeniously set, by an expert dentist, that after a few days' use, the possessor almost forgets that they are artificial. But the operator must be a master of his business.

The porcelain, incorruptible, metallic, or silicium teeth, are now generally admitted to be superior to any other in use. These different appellations all mean the same thing ; they are, properly speaking, *incorruptible porcelain teeth*. But, for our own part, we must say, that if we were unfortunately compelled to resort to false teeth, we should prefer sound healthy human teeth to the best ever made by art. We shall, however, always keep on hand a large quantity of these incorruptible teeth, the best that can be had, of both foreign and domestic manufacture, and must conscientiously give the preference to those which are manufactured in this country, because we think them superior, in every respect, to those which are imported ; and we are confident that the profession in general will agree with us in this respect. We shall also constantly keep on hand a

regular supply of natural human teeth, warranted to be perfectly healthy.

We have also made arrangements with a gentleman, who has just arrived from England, and who has devoted himself entirely to this branch of the art, and who is emphatically a *mechanical genius*; formerly a jeweller by trade, and has been employed by the first dentists in England, seven or eight years, in this particular branch of dentistry, viz. setting teeth upon gold plates. With his assistance, we trust that we shall be able to give entire satisfaction.

In the foregoing little familiar treatise on the teeth, we have studied to be as brief as possible; well aware that those who wish for farther information on the subject can have access to learned and more elaborate publications, such as Bell, Fitch, and others. Our sole object, as before in-

timated, was to call the reader's attention to the *importance* of the subject, and we are confident that the preceding pages are as well calculated for that purpose as a quarto volume would be. If it saves one human being a single pang of toothach, or preserves the beauty of a single mouth, we shall be amply repaid for our time and trouble.

The *toothach*! how many bitter and stinging reminiscences does that single word conjure up to the startled fancy, in the minds of almost every reader ; for there are few who have reached the age of puberty, that have wholly escaped what Burns calls its “venom'd stang,” in the following characteristic lines :

“ My curse upon thy venom'd stang,  
 That shoots my tortured gums alang,  
 And through my lugs gi'es mony a twang,  
 Wi' gnawing vengeance,  
 Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,  
 Like racking engines !

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,  
Rheumatics gnaw, or colic squeezes,  
Our neighbour's sympathy may ease us,  
    Wi' pitying moan;  
But thee, thou hell o' a' diseases,  
    Ay mocks our groan!

Where'er that place be, priests ca' hell,  
Whence a' the tones of misery yell,  
And ranked plagues their numbers tell,  
    In dreadfu' raw;  
Thou, toothach, surely bear'st the bell  
    Aboon them a'!"

THE END.



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